

Office of New Americans Advisory Board Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 12, 2022
1:00pm-5:00PM
Raleigh Building
1001 W. Franklin Street, Richmond VA 23220

DRAFT FOR REVIEW

Office of New Americans Advisory Board (ONAAB) members present:

Hassan Ahmad, Kate Ayers, Hannah Borja, Amelia Castaneda, Dr. Fern Hauck, Michael Hoefer, Susannah Lepley, Eric Lin, Djibril Niang, Ahoo Salem, Milton Vickerman, Rammy Barbari, Amelia Castenada Smith, Bo Machayo

ONAAB members absent: *Dora Muhammad, Juan Santacoloma, Jennifer Crewalk, Soyoung Yoon*

ONAAB Ex-officio members present:

Lyons Sanchezconcha, Chair, Latino Advisory Board

Office of New Americans (ONA) and Governor's Office Staff present:

Grace Reynolds, Program Administration Specialist, Office of New Americans and Board Administrator, ONAAB

Additional Guests:

Dr. Saltanat Liebert & Dr. Grant Rissler, L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs, Virginia Commonwealth University

Megan Healy, Secretary of Labor

Barbara Allison-Bryan, Chief Deputy Director – Dept of Health Professions

Kathryn Dolan, Director, Business Development and Outreach Services -DSBSD

Matthew James, Director of the Small Business and Biodiversity

Jacques Mushagasha, African Business Partnership

Welcome and Call to Order

Eric Lin (Chair)

- Called the meeting to order at 1:00pm. It was noted that we have quorum.
- Eric introduced Bo Machayo, newest board member.

July 7, 2021, Meeting Minutes Approval

Kate Ayers

- Called for corrections to the October 6, 2021, meeting minutes.
- Corrections include:
 - Page 2, in first full paragraph- take out the extra word (motion).
 - Fern's name needs to be corrected to be Dr. Fern Hauck

Kate Ayers: Called for a motion

- **Dr. Fern Hauck moved to approve the July 7, 2021 meeting minutes with no changes.**
- **Hassan Ahmad seconded the motion.**
- **Board members unanimously voted to approve the October 6, 2021 meeting minutes.**

Member	Yes	No	Abstain
Ahmad, Hassan	X		
Ayers, Kate	X		
Barbari, Rammy	X		
Borja, Hannah "Mel"	X		
Hauck, Fern	X		
Hoefer, Michael	X		
Lepley, Susannah	X		
Lin, Eric	X		
Niang, El Hadji Djibril	X		
Salem, Ahoo	X		
Santacoloma, Juan	X		
Smith, Amelia Castaneda	X		
Vickerman, Milton	X		
Yoon, Soyoung	X		
Manchayo, Bo	X		

Public Comment

Eric Lin called for public comment. No public comment was offered.

Chair Report

Eric Lin provided a summary of EC activities and ONAAB business since the last meeting.

- See slide deck [here](#) for comprehension notes, but here are some highlights:
- EC met 2 times and met with Senator Hashmi and Delegate Tran to discuss board recommendations.
- EC + a few board members met with Northam in November.
- Eric acknowledged that we are in the middle of a transition, and at this point it is difficult to determine what our work will look like under the new administration.

Administration Update

Mona Siddiqui, Deputy Director- Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

With the administration change, this will be her last as the policy advisor for the ONA. Mona highlighted some of the things that were accomplished:

- Language Access Report.
- Governor's summary report on the Executive Leadership Team on Immigrant Integration.
- Based on these reports, Senator Hashmi and Delegate Tran will release legislation this session.
- We do not know who will be in the ODEI with new administration.
- Mona shared some remarks from Dr. Underwood:
 - The paperwork to transition ONA to DSS is underway
 - There is still a lot of American Rescue Act funding. We should push to use it to carry on the work of the language audit.
 - Highlighted legislation that came out of ODEI: Make the ODEI lead a secretariat, repeal bill that makes English an official language in VA.
 - Dr. Underwood encourages the members of the ONA to testify on these bills.

Office of New Americans Update

Grace Reynolds, Board Liaison

- Reported on the green card center- The funding left over from this venture. The funding will be donated to the Muslim Community Center and a health clinic in Northern VA. The total given to these 2 groups is just over \$181,000.
- Latest numbers of Afghan Parolees to be resettled in VA 4,093. Seyoum projects that an estimate of 2,000 more will resettle in VA.
- Team Rubicon was deployed at Dullas and now are in NOVA to help manage storage.
- Contract modification to increase funding to resettlement agencies is coming soon. Here are the numbers for now:
 - IRC 346
 - CCC Richmond 200
 - CCC Roanoke 111
 - CCC Norfolk 189
 - CCC 878 (nova)
 - LSS- 635 (nova)
 - LIRS 654 (nova)
 - CWS Harrisonburg 150 + 50 Winchester
 - ECDC 377 (nova)
- Dr. Hauck asked about numbers across the country waiting to leave bases- Grace reported that this number is difficult to know.

VCU Needs Assessment

Dr. Saltanat Liebert & Dr. Grant Rissler, L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs, Virginia Commonwealth University

- You can access the report [here](#).
- This presentation are the results of phase 1 of the study.
- There are 2 key research questions:
 - What are the unmet needs /barriers to integration that are experienced by immigrants in Virginia?
 - What recommendations can be made to influence policies and decisions?
- This is a preliminary report only. It is not for public distribution.
- The final report will be delivered to the ONA office by the 15th of June.
- GIS Mapping is a part of the study – It is a layering of different types of geographical data to show a distribution of certain key factors.
- There is also a language mapping as well.
- Dr. Liebert reviewed the qualitative interview findings. These were based on the 7 dimensions of integration: Sociocultural, Socioeconomic, political/civic, legal status, health status, family, and spatial. She shared the major themes in each of these dimensions that came from the interviews.
- The next step will be to recruit individuals or groups of immigrants from diverse backgrounds to interview. Interpreters will be available, and the interviews will be either in person or virtual. Dr. Liebert and Dr. Rissler will be reaching out to ONAAB members for connections.

Workforce Development Panel

Megan Healy, Secretary of Labor

Barbara Allison-Bryan, Chief Deputy Director – Dept of Health Professions

Susannah Lepley introduced Dr. Barbara Allison-Bryan.

- You can access her presentation [here](#).
- Key data: 25% of all physicians in VA are International Medical Graduates (IMG) and first-time pass rate of the USMLE is 80%.
- Barbara shared some proposed pathways to licensure for IMGs. VA already adds 25 new residency positions each year.
- What we need to add is earmarked residency positions for IMGs.
- She shared Canada's model for a more streamlined way for foreign trained physicians to get licensed here. What is missing in Virginia is to push this kind of model through legislation.
- She also shared a list of medical careers you can attain in less than 2 years. These are great options that require little training. G3 is a program that provides funding for people going into these areas. Newcomers could be offered for G3 funding.

Susannah Lepley introduced Megan Healy, Secretary of Labor

- Megan released a report and it can be accessed [here](#).
- She convened a workgroup of stakeholders (local, state, national partners,

nonprofit organizations, ethnic communities, and government agencies) to help guide this report.

- She shared 5 goals that were developed from this group that involve ways to reduce barriers to workforce opportunities for newcomers.
- Eric asked about the new administration's focus on workforce development- She stated that the new governor will be very involved in workforce.

Break

Small Business Association Assistance and Support

Kathryn Dolan, Director, Business Development and Outreach Services -DSBSD

Matthew James, Director of the Small Business and Biodiversity

- Rammy Barbari introduced Kathy Dolan
- You can access her presentation here.
- The Small Business Association and Support agency was formed in 2014.
- 99% of all businesses in VA are considered small. (250 employees or less)
- Women are opening businesses 1.5 times faster than men, and the majority of these women are from minority communities.
- Kathy encouraged the group to contact her if we have any questions in this space. If she can't answer it, she will connect us to someone who can.
- Matthew encouraged us to follow the access to capital programs because they will support small business development through grants.
- They do several workshops to help small businesses with resources, and provide 1:1 consultation for how to use EVA database. (procurement) All are free.
- There is a business one stop website- it is a free online resource to share.
- Kathy said that she would offer core workshops in other languages. She said to contact her if someone would like to partner and offer a workshop in another language. --Kathryn.dolan@sbsd.virginia.gov

International Business Opportunities

Jacques Mushagasha, African Business Partnership

- Djbril introduced Jacques.
- He discussed the opportunities for VA to increase international business with African countries.
- The project has 4 focuses:
 1. Develop workforce training for African immigrants here to transform raw materials (purchased from Africa) to sell.
 2. Create partnerships between VA Universities and Universities in Africa.
 3. Build sister city partnerships between VA cities and African cities.
 4. Create a marketplace so Africans can sell their things from Africa here in VA.

Office of New Americans Advisory Board Vision

Hannah Borja, Vice Chair

Mel shared the board vision statement with the combined suggestions from the last meeting and asked for feedback. Here is the vision with the suggested changes:

Mel asked for a motion to approve the vision statement with changes stated above and reads:
The Office of New Americans Advisory Board envisions a Commonwealth which New American are respected, valued, supported, and provided opportunities and tools for civic, linguistic, and economic integration in order to thrive in our communities.

- **Michael Hoefer moved to approve the mission statement as stated above.**
- **Hassan Ahmad seconded the motion.**
- **Board members unanimously voted to approve the mission statement as stated above.**

Member	Yes	No	Abstain
Ahmad, Hassan	X		
Ayers, Kate	X		
Barbari, Rammy	X		
Borja, Hannah "Mel"	X		
Hauck, Fern	X		
Hoefer, Michael	X		
Lepley, Susannah	X		
Lin, Eric	X		
Niang, El Hadji Djibril	X		
Salem, Ahoo	X		
Santacoloma, Juan	X		
Smith, Amelia Castaneda	X		
Vickerman, Milton	X		
Yoon, Soyoung	X		
Manchayo, Bo	X		

Miscellaneous Board Business

Eric Lin

October Meeting is scheduled for the 5th- This is Yom Kippur. We need to change this meeting date. We propose moving this meeting to October 12, 2022.

- **Eric moved to change the October meeting from October 5th to October 12, 2022:**
- **Hassan Ahmad motioned**
- **Susannah Lepley Seconded the vote**
- **Board members unanimously voted to approve the moving the October 5th meeting to October 12, 2022**

Member	Yes	No	Abstain
Ahmad, Hassan	X		
Ayers, Kate	X		
Barbari, Rammy	X		
Borja, Hannah “Mel”	X		
Hauck, Fern	X		
Hoefler, Michael	X		
Lepley, Susannah	X		
Lin, Eric	X		
Niang, El Hadji Djibril	X		
Salem, Ahoo	X		
Santacoloma, Juan	X		
Smith, Amelia Castaneda	X		
Vickerman, Milton	X		
Yoon, Soyoung	X		
Manchayo, Bo	X		

Closing Remarks

- Look out for legislation that may come out that we as individuals may want to support.

Adjourn